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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 000311

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TAGS: [OVIP](#) [BIDEN](#) [JOSEPH](#) [PREL](#) [ENRG](#) [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [CI](#)
SUBJECT: U.S.-CHILE MARCH 28 BILATERAL DURING VICE
PRESIDENT BIDEN'S VISIT TO CHILE

Classified By: AMBASSADOR PAUL E. SIMONS FOR REASONS 1.4 (B/D).

[1](#)1. (U) March 28, 2009; 7:45 pm; La Moneda, Santiago, Chile.

[1](#)2. (U) Participants:

U.S.
Antony Blinken, National Security Advisory to the
Vice President
Brian McKeon, Deputy National Security Advisor to
the Vice President
Paul Simons, U.S. Ambassador to Chile
Dan Restrepo, Senior Director, Western Hemisphere
Affairs, National Security Council
Craig Kelly, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs,
U.S. Dept. of State
Timothy Stater (notetaker), Economic/Political
Counselor, U.S. Embassy Santiago

CHILE
Mariano Fernandez, Minister of Foreign Relations
Marcelo Tokman, Minister of Energy
Juan Pablo Lira, Director General of Foreign
Policy
Marcos Robledo, International Affairs Advisor to
the President
Francisco Javier Diaz, Political Advisor to the
President
Isauro Torres, MFA Director for North America

[1](#)3. (C) SUMMARY: While Vice President Biden and President
Bachelet met separately, U.S. and Chilean delegation members
discussed the importance of a successful Summit of the
Americas. The Chileans highlighted the opportunity to make
an important announcement on energy cooperation at the April
17-19 Summit in Trinidad. The Energy Minister noted
coordination could include the signing of an MOU at the
Summit on a U.S.-Chile pilot solar plant in Chile and/or the
establishment of a renewable Energy Research Center, which
could facilitate the transfer of energy technology throughout
the hemisphere. Both sides agreed to work closely to
identify the most effective way forward, and in time for the
Summit, on the collaborative energy proposals. END SUMMARY.

Preparing The Summit Of The Americas

[1](#)4. (C) Foreign Minister Fernandez emphasized there are
several important issues to be addressed at the upcoming
Summit of the Americas in Trinidad and Tobago. Fernandez
welcomed Vice President Biden's visit to Chile -- the first
senior White House representative to visit Latin America --
emphasizing the important message it sends to the hemisphere.
He also noted the Energy Minister's efforts promoting
cooperation with the United States on clean and renewable
energy, which offers a constructive path forward.

[1](#)5. (C) National Security Adviser Antony Blinken expressed
appreciation for Chile's hosting the March 27-28 Progressive
Governance Summit. He also agreed that cooperating on

energy, including on renewable energy sources, was a good option that could help other countries avoid many of the mistakes made by the United States. Blinken added that Vice President Biden would be in contact with the U.S. Secretary of Energy to discuss Chile's interest in energy cooperation.

Promoting Joint Energy Projects

¶16. (C) Energy Minister Tokman praised ongoing energy cooperation with Washington and the U.S. Embassy. He added there is an opportunity to make a real contribution to reducing green house emissions. Tokman argued that transferring energy technology is the best way to convince developing countries, including those in Latin America, to quickly restrict emissions into the atmosphere. He encouraged a flexible mechanism to fund energy technology transfers.

¶17. (C) Tokman proposed that, at the Summit in Trinidad, the United States and Chile should announce they would each fund one-half of a \$30 million energy initiative. This funding could help establish one or two solar energy pilot projects in Chile, becoming a model for other such projects in the hemisphere.

Research and Renewable Energy Centers

¶18. (C) The Energy Minister proposed the establishment of a center for renewable energy in Chile, which would also help the region. He said Chile is fortunate to have many natural resources, and the country is in the best place for different types of renewable sources of energy. Tokman said Chile would welcome the opportunity to sign agreements with U.S. research institutions such as the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado or the University of California Berkeley laboratories under the Chile-California partnership. He said that if there were agreement before April 24, the proposed U.S.-Chile accord could be announced at an upcoming solar energy seminar in San Francisco.

¶19. (C) WHA PDAS Craig Kelly noted Washington's interagency process is analyzing several energy options, including possibly locating various types of energy centers in different Latin American countries. Ambassador Simons said the Department of Energy is working on initiatives that incorporate some of the Chilean ideas. In addition to promoting energy technology transfer, an energy center would facilitate joint research projects and successfully bring innovative research opportunities to the southern hemisphere.

¶10. (C) Foreign Minister Fernandez concluded the meeting by urging an MOU be signed in a bilateral framework coinciding with the Summit of the Americas. Both sides agreed to further study the options that could best advance energy collaboration ahead of the Summit.

¶11. (SBU) The meeting, which the Chilean delegation likely expected would last at least 30 minutes, was cut short after about 10 minutes when the Chilean Chief of Protocol entered the room and summoned both sides to join President Bachelet and Vice President Biden at a press availability.

¶12. (U) The Office of the Vice President cleared this message.

SIMONS